

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SCS-03 SCA-01 SY-05

SCCT-01 /078 W

----- 122406

O P 301420Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4832

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0363

FOLLOWING FROM MACFARLANE (DRAFTED MAY 29)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC (HUNTER AND SMITH)

SUBJECT: TANGOV ARRESTS OF WABEMBE TRIBESMEN

1. LOCAL MISSIONARY MARROW (PROTECT SCRUPULOUSLY), WHO HAS EXCELLENT AFRICAN CONTACTS, REPORTED THIS EVENING THAT TANGOV AUTHORITIES KIGOMA HAVE UNDERTAKEN A MAJOR ROUNDUP OF WABEMBE TRIBESMEN LIVING IN KIGOMA AREA. THIS BEGAN NIGHT OF MAY 27 AND IS CONTINUING. MARROW BELIEVES THAT DETENTIONS MAY NOW INVOLVE SEVERAL HUNDRED TO UPWARDS OF A THOUSAND WABEMBE IN THIS AREA. HIS THEORY IS THAT, GIVEN CLOSE TIES BETWEEN WABEMBE HERE AND OTHER SIDE OF LAKE, AND VERY STRONG LOYALTY AMONG MEMBERS OF THIS PARTICULAR ETHNIC GROUP, TANGOV BY ROUNDUP IS SEEKING TO PUT PRESSURE ON REBELLIOUS ELEMENTS IN FIZI AREA. THE IDEA, BY MARROW'S ACCOUNT, IS THAT DETENTIONS HERE WILL CONTINUE UNTIL OTHER SIDE RESPONDS BY FREEING HOSTAGES. ADDITIONAL ASPECT OF CASE IS REPORT THAT WABEMBE WILL BE MOVED TO

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TABORA.

2. LATER, FOREGOING WAS DISCUSSED WITH KIGOMA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR (RDD) MUNTHALI WHO CONFIRMED THAT ROUNDUP WAS ORDERED TO BRING PRESSURE ON OTHER SIDE. HE STATED THAT ARRESTS BASICALLY FOLLOW FROM RE-ARREST OF THOSE REBEL LEADERS LISTED IN THE REBEL STATEMENT OF DEMANDS. REGIONAL GOVERNMENT ALSO LOOKS UPON ARRESTS AS MEANS OF BRINGING INTO CUSTODY THOSE MULELIST SUPPORTERS WHO SERVE AS CHANNELS OF SUPPLY FOR REBELS ACROSS LAKE IN ZAIRE. WHEN ASKED IF THOSE TAKEN IN CUSTODY WILS SERVE AS HOSTAGES TO BALANCE OUT THOSE TAKEN BY OTHER SIDE, RDD REPLIED "THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT WE ARE TRYIN TO DO." RDD CONCLUDED BY REFERRING TO MAY 29 EVENING COMMENTARY ON RADIO TANZANIA (NOT HEARD BY US) WHICH STATED TANGOV POSITION RE THOSE KIDNAPPED. HIS READING OF RADIO EDITORIAL IS THAT TANGOV IS TAKING SAME TOUGH POSITION WITH REGARD TO KIDNAPPING AS WOULD BE TAKEN IF TANZANIAN NATIONALS HAD BEEN CAPTURED AND TAKEN TO ZAIRE BY MULELISTS.

3. MARROW ALSO TOLD US THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY SEVERAL OF HIS PARISHIONERS THAT EARLIER REPORT OF 12 PRO-REBEL ARMED WABEMBE ARRESTED HERE WAS CORRECT. STORY BECOMES MORE INTERESTING IN VIEW OF SUBSEQUENT REPORT THAT 11 OF 12 WERE SENT TO TABORA (POSSIBLY FOR QUESTIONING) BUT THAT 12TH WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THAT GROUP AND HAS SINCE DROPPED FROM VIEW HERE. SOME LOCAL AFRICANS WHO REMAINED IN TOUCH WITH GROUP ARE PERSUADED, SAYS MARROW, THAT 12TH WAS CLANDESTINELY SENT BY TANGOV BACK TO OTHER SIDE EITHER TO INITIATE DISCUSSIONS WITH REBELS OR AS EARNEST OF TANGOV'S WILLINGNESS TO DEMONSTRATE SOME GIVE ON ISSUE. KIGOMA IS A TOWN OF RUMORS AND WE CANNOT VOUCH FOR VERACITY OF THIS REPORT BUT BELIEVE THAT IT MUST BE PASSED ON. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO VERIFY IF POSSIBLE. (THIS MAY PROVE TO BE DIFFICULT AS VARIOUS REGIONAL OFFICIALS HAVE NEVER ADMITTED TO US--DESPITE SEVERAL INVITATIONS TO DO SO--THAT THE 12 WERE ARRESTED.)

4. BOTH OF FOREGOING SUGGEST TO US THAT TANGOV MAY BE MORE PROVE TO MOVE ON HOSTAGE MATTER THAN PUBLIC STATEMENTS WOULD INDICATE. THIS IS CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT IF TRUE. THEREFORE, DESPITE CURRENT DISTANCE BETWEEN USG AND TANGOV PUBLIC POSITIONS ON ISSUE, WE FELT TODAY THAT ROUNDUP OF WABEMBE WAS SUFFICIENTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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OBVIOUS ACTION TO JUSTIFY SOME FAIRLY DIRECT QUESTIONING ON OUR PART. AS OPPORTUNITIES PRESENT THEMSELVES, WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ASCERTAIN WHAT TANGOV IS UP TO HERE.

5. NONETHELESS, CURRENT SITUATION UNDERLINES DELICACY OF OUR POSITION HERE. IN VIEW TANGOV PUBLIC "HANDS OFF" POSITION ON HOSTAGE MATTER, WE CAN ANTICIPATE ONLY LIMITED COOPERATION FROM LOCAL OFFICIALS RE CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR NEGOTIATIONS. AT

SAME TIME, CONVERSATION WITH RDD EVENING OF MAY 29 (SEE PARA 2)
ALLOWS US TO FEEL THAT LOCAL OFFICIALS DO RECOGNIZE OUR NEED
NOW TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS WITH CAPTORS.
PENDING SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS AS TO HOW WE SHOULD PROCEED,
WE DID NOT RAISE WITH RDD THE SPECIFIC POSSIBILITIES BEING
EXPLORED, BUT WE DID LEAVE WITH CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT RDD
UNDERSTANDS OUR POSITION AND WILL NOT HINDER US AS WE SEEK TO
DEVELOP LOCAL CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION.

6. FOR DCM DAR: UNDERSTAND YOU ARE HOSTING DINNER
MAY 30 AT WHICH MGAYA, TABORA REGIONAL COMMISSIONER, WILL BE
PRESENT. YOU MAY WISH TO CHECK WITH HIM RE SITUATION IN GENERAL
AND RE REPORTS CONTAINED PARAS 1 AND 3 UNQUOTE.
MARK

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